A

SERMON,

DELIVERED IN THE

PARISH CHURCH OF THRAPSTON,

IN THE

COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON;

AT THE

CONSECRATION OF THE COLOURS,

OF THE

THRAPSTON CORPS

OF

VOLUNTEER CAVALRY & INFANTRY,

AUGUST 11, 1800.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED THE

CEREMONY

OBSERVED ON THE ABOVE OCCASION.

BY SEPTIMUS HODSON, M. B.

RECTOR, AND CHAPLAIN TO THE CORPS.

WELLINGBOROUGH,

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1800.

DEDICATION.

To the Officers, and Members of the Thrapſton Corps of Volunteer Cavalry and Infantry, and of the Wellingborough Troop of Volunteer Cavalry, this Sermon publiſhed at their joint requeſt, is reſpectfully inſcribed,

By their faithful
and affectionate
humble Servant,

THE PREACHER.

THE Ceremony observed at the presentation and consecration of the Colours of the *Thrapston* Volunteers on Monday Auguſt 11th 1800. The Corps, conſiſting of a Troop of Horse and Company of Infantry, paraded at the Market Cross at ½ paſt nine o'Clock. The Troop of Wellingborough Volunteer Cavalry (who, at the requeſt of the Corps undertook to keep the Ground during the whole of the day,) lined the ſtreet while Mrs. Squire, the Lady of the Captain Commandant, and who presented the Colours,—attended by several other Ladies, paſſed along. Mrs. Squire ascended the platform between Captain Hodson of the Wellingborough Troop, and Cornet Barclay of the Oundle Troop of County Yeomanry, each bearing a Colour,—attended by a numerous company of Ladies wearing Ribbons and Favors corresponding with the Uniform of the Corps: Immediately upon the appearance of Mrs. Squire the Band played "God save the King," and the whole Corps saluted;—the Cavalry with swords carried, and the Infantry with arms presented. The Captain Commandant, and Captain of the Infantry, ſtood at the foot of the Platform, uncovered, accompaned by their Officers with swords saluting: The Cavalry all the time carrying swords, and the Infantry having arms presented. Mrs. Squire then presented the ſtandard and Colours to the Commanders of the reſpective claſſes, accompanied with a very appropriate address, to which suitable replies were made by Captain Squire, Commandant of the whole Corps,—and Captain Robinson of the Infantry. The Standard was then delivered by Captain Squire to Cornet Tookey, and by Captain Robinson to Enſign Tenny; by each of whom animated, and well adapted, addreſſes, and replies, were made. The Standard and Colours were then marched to their proper ſtations, the Band playing "God save the King." The Ladies having retired, the Band continued for some time playing martial muſic. The Wellingborough Troop then lined

lined the way to the South Door of the Church, while Mrs. Squire, attended as before, and the proceſſion of Ladies, paſſed. The whole Corps having marched to Church, they were met at the North Door by the Reverend S. Hodson, Rector of the Pariſh, and their Chaplain; and the Reverend Sir Thomas Hewett, Baronet, who preceded them through the middle Aiſle to the Chancel, where the Infantry ſtood under arms at the Order; and the Cavalry with the swords carried, (both uncovered,) during the consecration of the Colours, which was performed by the Chaplain; each Clergyman kneeling at the Table, and holding a Colour. After the prayer of consecration, the Chaplain and aſſiſtant Clergyman ſtood at the table, each bearing a Colour, while the Choir sang the "Gloria in excelſis." After which the Corps returned Bayonets and Swords, and occupied benches prepared for them during the performance of divine Service;—which being concluded the Corps marched to their exerciſing ground. Upon the arrival of Mrs. Squire, who was escorted to the ground by the Wellingborough Troop, the whole Line saluted her with the Colours lowered, and the Band playing "God save the King." The Line afterwards paſſed the Lady; the Officers and Colours saluting her. The Troop and Company then took each their exerciſing ground; where it is but common juſtice to remark the truly respectable performance of men, who embodied only for the more effectual support of civil order, and without aſſuming the profeſſion of arms, nevertheless performed many evolutions both of ſkill and intricacy, which the beſt disciplined Regiment of the Line might have looked upon with approbation. After which the whole Corps again formed the Line, and saluted Mrs. Squire with Colours lowered;—the Band playing "God save the King" The Ground was kept by the Wellingborough Troop in a manner, which did them the higheſt credit, and which has received the thanks of the Thrapſton Corps.

PSALM 20th part of the 5th Verse. BIBLE VERSION.

In the name of our GOD we will ſet up our Banners.

THE whole of this Pſalm is a ſupplication, on the part of the people, for protection and ſucceſs to their King, in ſome great and arduous warfare in which he was engaged. The particular occaſion of it is ſuppoſed to be, when he ſent Joab to avenge the inſult, which He, and the people of God, had received from Hanun, King of the Ammonites, and which you will find detailed at large in 2 Sam. 10. and 1. Chro. 19. Before the army went forth, we read that they ſolemnly and devoutly recommended their cauſe to GOD, "In the name of our GOD we will "ſet up our Banners:" And before the battle commenced we again find their General exhorting them to courage,—declaring the cauſes of their warfare,—and religiouſly invoking the favour of the Lord of Hoſts, "Be of good cou-"rage, and let us behave ourſelves valiantly for

" our people, and for the cities of our GOD;
" and let the Lord do that which is good in his
" ſight." *

The Banner, Standard, or Colours, is, in military uſe, mearly the diſtinguiſhing mark, and rallying point, of different portions of the ſame army: But it is uſed in Scripture metaphorically for the cauſe in which it is engaged,—all the means of warfare which are employed,—and the ſignal for the exertion of powerful and united efforts. Thus when Joſhua overcame Amelek, " Moſes built an altar" in commemoration of the victory, " and called the name of it Jehovah-niſſi, " (i. e.) the Lord my Banner." † So when David ſent forth his armies againſt the Ammonites andSyrians, he firſt conſecrates the Banners, (i. e.) his cauſe, to GOD, " In the " name of our GOD we will ſet up our Banners." So in the caſe of former victories he ſays, " Thou " haſt given a Banner to them that fear thee," (‡ i. e.) a point of union in the Sovereign he had ſet over them,—a powerful army to oppoſe their enemies,—and a triumphant iſſue of the conflict. In this ſenſe it is alſo uſed by the Prophet, " All " ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on " the earth, ſee ye, when he lifteth up an enſign " on the mountains." § In this ſenſe it hath been uſed by all civilized nations: To the taking the

*I. Chro. 19. 13. †Exo. 17. 15. ‡Ps. 60. 4. §Isaiah 18. 3.

the Standards of their enemies,—and maintaining or reſcueing their own, the hope and honour of the conflict,—the overthrow, or triumph of their cauſe has been in a conſiderable degree attached. In this ſenſe they have been this day delivered into the hands of men, who preſume, without impiety, to couple their cauſe with the holy name of GOD. In this ſenſe they are now brought into the Houſe of GOD;—not by any ſuperſtitious ceremony to have a fancied ſanctity, or ſome magic powers of protection, communicated to them: But as all the undertakings of man ſhould be conſecrated to the Glory and ſervice of GOD, as on all his labours the divine Bleſſing ought firſt to be piouſly implored,—ſo in this great cauſe which involves every public and private bleſſing,—the preſervation of Religion, Liberty, and Law,—the poſſeſſion of property,—and the ſecurity and enjoyment of our families,—we firſt come into the Houſe of GOD, humbly preſuming that our's, is a juſt and holy cauſe. At His altar we receive theſe Banners, which as they can never be taken from their Bearers without the diſcomfiture of the cauſe in which they are employed, ſo we conſider as emblematic of that cauſe, and the pledge that we will defend it with our Lives: We ſay therefore, "In the name of our "GOD we will ſet up theſe our Banners;" And having preſumed to do ſo in humble confidence

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of the divine favour, we proceed to encourage each other under the Banners which we have ſo ſet up in the words of Joab, " Be of good courage, and " let us behave ourſelves valiantly for our people, " and for the cities of our God;"—piouſly reſigning the event to his holy will,—" let the Lord " do that which is good in his ſight."

This is all which is meant by the conſecration of the Colours: It is in other words the ſolemn invocation of a Bleſſing upon the holy cauſe of defending the ancient and venerable fabric of our Religion, Laws, and Conſtitution. And as in our private wants we put up our petitions to the throne of grace in our cloſets, ſo it is ſurely becoming,—it is more than decent,—it is abſolutely demanded of us, that in the general cauſe of ſociety in this country, we ſolemnly meet together in the Houſe of GOD, and put up our prayers collectively in the great congregation of the people.

There is another part of the ceremony, which that nothing may be conſidered as idle, or even uninſtructive, it may not be amiſs to explain, viz. The preſentation of theſe Banners by female hands: By which, They, who have voluntarily undertaken the defence and good order of their country, are to derive an additional incitement to

zeal,

zeal, courage, and perſeverance, in the conſideration that in this cauſe is involved the protection of every dear and tender tie,—of all whom we moſt love and value,—of all which renders Life ſweet, and human intercourſe amiable. In preſenting them with theſe Banners they are reminded, that "they are to behave themſelves valiantly for "our people, and for the cities of our GOD:" When they look upon them in the hour of conflict and of danger, they will feel every ſentiment of Love and Honour animating them to defend them bravely;—while they wave over their heads, they will ſeem to proclaim the Language of Nehemiah to the children of Iſrael, "Be not ye "afraid of them: remember the Lord which is "great and terrible, and fight for your Brethren, "your Sons, and your Daughters, your Wives, "and your Houſes." *

I have been thus diffuſe in ſpeaking of the ſolemnity of this day, that the moſt uninformed of my hearers may not miſtake the intention of it, or be deprived of the advantage of conſcientiouſly uniting with the congregation his fervent devotions to "the Lord ſtrong and mighty, the Lord "mighty in battle," † without whoſe Bleſſing "the ſtrong ſhall not ſtrengthen his force, neither "ſhall the mighty deliver himſelf." ‡ Permit me now,

*Nehem. 4. 14. †Ps. 24. 8. ‡Amos 2. 14

now, deeply as every thinking man muſt be impreſſed with the protection and ſecurity already derived from theſe Inſtitutions,—and awfully as we muſt look forward in the thickening clouds of our political Horizon to the arduous exertions which may be required of them, to remind you, my Brethren of this aſſociation, of the principles on which you have aſſociated; and the engagements and duties which are evidently implied in your compact. Theſe I take to be the broad, and only juſt, principles on which Britiſh citizens can at any time aſſociate together in arms viz. the defence of our religion, our laws, and our government;—the defence of them I ſay as they now ſtand;—and zealouſly and unaffectedly attached to them, and ſatisfied with the bleſſings we poſſeſs under them,—looking with apprehenſion, and determined reſiſtance, to every unhallowed hand, which attempts their ſubverſion either avowedly, or by innovation.

I will not inſult you by an encomium on the Britiſh conſtitution, which would ſeem to imply a diſtruſt of your attachment to it. I will not enlarge upon the Bleſſing we poſſeſs in a pure and reformed religion, which, bleſſed be GOD, we ſtill retain a ſufficient ſenſe of to give us the beſt grounded hope of ultimate preſervation,—the influence of which we ſtill own enough of to aſſemble before the throne of grace to humble

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ourſelves in ſeaſons of national affliction, and to pour out our thanksgivings in more eſpecial demonſtrations of providential favour: I will not magnify the protection of our Laws, which hedge round the meaneſt and moſt friendleſs Subject ſo ſecurely, that not even the rage of a whole nation, kindled at the attempt upon a revered and much loved Sovereign, can touch one hair of his head, if he be not a proper object of legal cognizance: I will not exalt the excellence of a government, under which ſtraitned as we have lately been by the fatherly correction of providence, burdened with Taxes for the defence of the common cauſe, which entrench not only upon our Luxuries, but the very comforts,—and even neceſſaries of ſome, I will not, I ſay, exalt the excellence of a Government under which we live, ſtill conſcious that no other nation enjoys an equal degree of privileges and happineſs,—and conſcious that we are the envy, and objects of jealouſy, of all other nations: I will not waſte your time in enlarging upon topics, which every heart and every tongue throughout theſe realms exultingly proclaims, which ſhouts "GOD SAVE THE KING." Theſe, my Brethren, are the principles on which you have aſſociated, ever bearing in mind, that the protection of perſon and property is not only in a degree *connected* with, but abſolutely *depending* upon the maintenance of our Religion,

Laws,

Laws, and Government.

Theſe being the principles which have induced you, at the invitation of Government, to aſſociate yourſelves in arms, I cannot doubt but that you have foreſeen, and well conſidered, all the duties which are attached to your military connection, as well as thoſe which may ariſe out of the cauſe you have undertaken to defend.

And theſe are of two kinds, 1ſt, *ſuch as belong to your military capacity.* And here you will recollect, that as no part of your conduct is under the coercion of military Law, ſo it is eſſential that you eſtabliſh an order, and diſcipline amongſt yourſelves, which ſhall be moſt ſtrictly maintained upon the point of Honour;—and to the breach of which diſgrace, and dereliction of principle, muſt be attached, not only amongſt yourſelves, but amongſt your fellow citizens. And here you will obſerve that an attention to exerciſe, and reſpect and obedience to your Officers while you are under arms, are as much incumbent upon you, as upon any other deſcription of Troops. Without this your aſſociation can have no poſſible effect;—during it's training it would be childiſh and contemptible, and if called upon for ſervice would be feeble and ineffective.

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Connected with diſcipline and obedience to Officers in your reſpective claſſes, are general harmony and unanimity, which are equally eſſential to that reſpect which you naturally wiſh to be held in amongſt thoſe to whom you afford ſecurity and protection, and to that efficiency which you deſire to prove in the hour of danger. You have every motive which can unite men together with the warmeſt cordiality. You have one common cauſe, and one common intereſt to protect, you are governed by regulations of your own framing, and commanded by officers of your own recommendation.

Beſide the duties of *training*, you will likewiſe remember the *obligations* you have voluntarily impoſed upon yourſelves, when your ſervices are actually required. And here I allude not to defence againſt the invaſion of a foreign enemy. In this caſe the heart of a Briton will not want inſtructing in his duty. But the more common occaſioos on which Bodies of this kind will be called upon to act, are in ſupport of the civil power for the preſervation of the public peace. On every occaſion of this kind, the ſame prompt attendance and activity are required of you, as in caſes of foreign invaſion, or actual rebellion. We know that riots, and diſorderly meetings, frequently ariſe from prejudices, and reports

falſely and wickedly propagated for the worſt of purpoſes. But I will even admit that poſſible caſes may occur where the popular reſentment is juſtly excited. In ſuch caſes being ourſelves citizens, as well as ſoldiers, and poſſibly intereſted alſo in the cauſe of clamour, we may, perhaps naturally, liſten to our own feelings, and think that ſuch a cauſe is unworthy of our interference. Here then, my Brethren, pardon me for reminding you, that it is not your province to make diſtinctions of this kind. So long as you continue members of the aſſociation you are bound, on every principle of honour and moral obligation, to keep the peace at the requiſition of the civil power wherever you find it diſturbed. If individuals ſhould be aggrieved, or the public indignation juſtly excited, the Laws of this country are open, and fully ſufficient, to give complete redreſs to every public or private grievance and oppreſſion, and it is your duty to oblige the parties to await the deciſion of ſuch an appeal. So in every neighbourhood it happens that particular perſons are obnoxious; and I mean not to deny that in ſome caſes they are juſtly ſo. It is poſſible that in ſuch inſtances, we may not feel the obligation to protect them from inſult very ſtrong upon us. But the ſame reaſoning applies on theſe occaſions alſo. " The beginning of ſtrife is as when one

"letteth out water;" * and when once tumult has commenced, no man can tell where it ſhall end. On theſe, and every occaſion, you are not to be judges;—but inſtruments in ſupport of the civil power. You are to indulge no private feelings; but when diſorder takes place, you will feel yourſelves called upon to fly at the firſt notice, without excuſe or reſervation, to the ſpot where your ſervices are required.

2dly. You have other duties, which in your private capacities you will feel to ariſe out of the cauſe which you have pledged yourſelves to each other to maintain. Such (e. g.) are the following;—as protectors of the public peace in your *military* character, it behoves you in your *private* capacities to be examples of good order, and to *prevent* and ſuppreſs leſſer irregularities whenever they fall within your notice.

You will recollect alſo that you have made a particular declaration of "your faithful attach-"ment to the perſon of his Majeſty," and "of your "firm perſuaſion of the eminent Bleſſings of our "Conſtitution." † Theſe are times in which it may be peculiarly ſaid of our Government "He "that is not with me is againſt me." Conſiſtently with your declared principles, you cannot ſuffer

* Prov. 17. 14. † Vid declar. of principles art. 1, 2.

ſuffer others to indulge in diſaffected converſation, without conſidering it as an inſult to yourſelves in the hoſtility it breathes to the principles which you have avowed. It is farther incumbent upon you to looſe no opportunity of declaring theſe principles,—of expreſſing your loyalty to the King, and affection to his government, and your reſolution, (agreeably to the declaration you have ſigned,) to check, and bring to juſtice, thoſe, who attempt to diſſeminate principles inimical to the conſtitution.*

I would remind you alſo that the religious ceremony of this day, and the ſolemn invocation of the name of the Lord upon the cauſe in which you are engaged, do moſt ſolemnly pledge you to the ſtrict and conſcientious diſcharge of every religious and moral duty in your individual capacities. You aſk the favour of the Lord only while you endeavour to deſerve it: And the ſolemn invocation of his Bleſſing implies, like the ſenſe of an Oath in civil matters, the calling down his wrath, if you forfeit the conditions on which you aſk it. Every victory, and every ſucceſs, which was granted to the Jews, was only while they piouſly relied upon the Lord of Hoſts. On the contrary, we may recollect, as an awful warning, what is recorded of the children of Ephraim,

* Vid. Declar. art. 6.

Ephraim, how "being armed and carrying Bows, "they turned back in the day of Battle;"—and the reaſon given is, becauſe "they kept not the "covenant of GOD, and refuſed to walk in his "Laws."* For GOD's ſake,—my Brethren,—for the ſake of our own Souls,—for the ſake of every domeſtic comfort, and every public good,—let us take warning by the dreadful miſeries with which Atheiſm and Infidelity have deluged other countries, and reſolve never to deny, but ever to fight ſpiritually under the Banners of, our Lord and Saviour.

Thus have I laid before you, with freedom and plainneſs, ſuch topics as I conceived were moſt likely to improve the ſolemnity of this day. It is now my duty, and be aſſured that I *feel myſelf* honoured in the opportunity of diſcharging it, to offer my humble, but unworthy, tribute of praiſe, for the Loyalty and patriotic zeal which firſt united you in your own, and your country's, cauſe; and which under circumſtances but little encouraging, and in a diſtrict of comparatively ſmall population, has nevertheleſs ſpread with enthuſiaſm,—not only amongſt a reſpectable Yeomanry,—but throughout all the other orders of our neighbours; and which both from the reſpectability of your appearance as a mi-

* Pſ. 78. 9. 10.

military corps, and the diſintereſtedneſs of the motives on which you have acted, intitle you to a conſiderable ſhare of eminence amongſt ſimilar eſtabliſhments. It is unneceſſary to ſpeak of the utility of aſſociations of loyal men armed, at the invitation of Government, for defence and protection. If we wiſh for an example of their efficiency in the hour of neceſſity, we need only look to their invaluable ſervices in the Siſter Kingdom in the late diſtracted ſtate of that country. Doubtleſs it is much owing to the zeal and alacrity, with which men of every rank and calling have arrayed themſelves into an effective domeſtic force, that our enemies have been hitherto diſcouraged from attempting their threatened invaſion. It is owing to the ſame cauſe, that the progreſs of diſaffection and treaſon, which were aſſuming the moſt formidable conſiſtency, has been checked; and effectual ſupport been given to thoſe ſalutary meaſures of the Legiſlature, which every unprejudiced man muſt be convinced has ſaved this country from inſurrection and bloodſhed.* At all events as a lo-

* Since the delivery of this Discourse a signal instance of the utility of Volunteer Corps has occurred at the Riot at the House of Correction in Cold Bath Fields, where the ready assistance of the neighbouring Associations probably rescued the Metropolis from the renewal of the terrible scenes of the Year 1780.

local inſtitution we feel in your ſervices a full protection from domeſtic tumult. And had your country received no other benefit from your eſtabliſhment, your utility and importance have been ſufficiently proved in the peace and good order which have been preſerved throughout a long ſeaſon of unparalleled diſtreſs.

And while here you claim, and have, our warmeſt gratitude and reſpect; let me not withhold the tribute of well earned praiſe to the peaceable demeanour which the poorer orders of our Brethren have uniformly obſerved. In a dearneſs of proviſions,—which to ſome of them I fear has been but little ſhort of famine,—the poor man has without murmuring purſued his courſe of dayly labour; tho' he knew it was inſufficient to ſatisfy the cravings of his hungry children, much leſs to furniſh comforts for the drooping part of his family, whoſe ſickly countenances bore melancholy teſtimony to the hardneſs of their fare. Much has been moſt honorably done by the humanity of the reſpective Pariſhes; yet grievous beyond example, and unknown, have been the ſufferings of individuals. Neverleſs the ſevereſt trials, which human neceſſity can experience, have been borne without clamour; their ſufferings and their woes have, generally ſpeaking, been expreſſed in the ſuppli-

cating eye to GOD, the Father of all,—and not in violence and injury to men. May "the "Barrel of Meal waſte not, nor the Cruſe of "Oil fail,"* 'till the Bounty of Heaven has completed it's Bleſſing upon the fruits of the earth, and rewarded their patience with plenty and cheapneſs!

Finally, while we are aſſembled together, to demonſtrate that, under the Bleſſings of GOD, we are determined to contend even to Death, in defence of every dear and ſacred obligation, ſhould it be his holy will to call us to the arduous trial; yet let us conclude the ſolemnity of the day with our humble ſupplication, that, if it be conſiſtent with the purpoſes of his providence, he would ſoften the hearts of our enemies, and ſay to the conflicting nations "It is enough; ſtay "now thine hand."† Had I the tongue of Angels, it would fail me to diſplay the benevolence, which the Goſpel breaths towards all mankind. All there are Brothers, all are of one Houſhold;—nations, climates, and languages make no diſtinction of Brotherhood. with this muſic then of the heavenly hoſt in our ears, "Glory to GOD in the higheſt;—on earth peace, "Good-will towards men"‡—with this ſentiment of Piety and Philanthropy warm at our hearts

*Kings 17. 14. †Saml. 24. 16. ‡Luke 2. 14.

hearts—with what ſorrow muſt we ſee the whole chriſtian world oppoſing the effects of this Goſpel of Peace,—thurſting for each other's Blood,—and bathing their hands in the warm ſtream of Life with more ruthleſs fury than the ſavage Beaſt impelled by the cravings of inſatiate hunger! GOD of unbounded goodneſs, how is thy Glory promoted admiſt hatred, rancour, and bloodſhed! Savour of Mankind, how is thy gracious meſſage completed, "deliverance to the captives,"* when the whole earth is excavated as it were into dungeons—when the parched ſoil is drenched with Blood—when the groans of the wounded and the dying—when the lamentations of the widow and the orphan vibrate on every Breeze, and aſcend in mournful clamour to the very gate of Heaven!—GOD of peace, aſſwage the wrath of the nations!—O! arm of the Lord interpoſe between the rage of conflicting armies! O GOD of mercy pity this ſcene of devaſtation and carnage! Once again let the fields, which now reſound with war, laugh and ſing with fruitful crops,—let the happineſs of the young glorify thee,—let the old men riſe up and bleſs thee! GOD of pity hear our prayer!

With this fervent addreſs to the Creator and Redeemer of mandkind I conclude, humbly be-

* Isaiah 61. 1. Luke 4. 18.

beſeeching him to accompliſh the prophecy when "the Earth ſhall be filled with the Knowledge "of the Glory, of the Lord, as the waters cover "the Sea."* "ALLELUIA; FOR THE LORD "GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH." †

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* Hab. 2. 14. † Rev. 19. 6.